October 2021 Newsletter Article

Principal Morris

Dear Como Park Senior High School Families,

Thank you for your continued support and flexibility as we navigate another year of learning during a global pandemic. Despite the challenges that continue to come our way, I am proud of this community and for the great start to this school year. Although we no longer have the yellow buses to transport our students to school, you have helped make this a smooth transition.

Even though we don't have regular school buses transporting our students to school each day, our school hours remain the same. Our start time is 8:30 and end time is 3:00. Students are not allowed in the building until 8:10 each morning and must leave the building immediately after the 3:00 bell rings. We have some students getting to school very early and waiting until they are let into the building. Please plan for your student to arrive at school no earlier than 8:10 but on time for the 8:30 start. This will be extremely important as it gets cold outside. No matter how cold it gets, the earliest we open the doors is 8:10 a.m.

Tuesday, November 2nd is Election Day and a Digital Learning Day for all SPPS students. The purpose of this Digital Learning Day is to address health and wellness concerns due to community use of our school buildings on election day and exposure to COVID. The Board of Education adjusted the SPPS schedule to make Election Day a digital learning day. This means all students will learn from home on Election Day. Online Learning lessons will be provided by teachers. This serves as a contact day with students.

Sincerely,

Kirk Morris, Principal
Indigenous People’s Day
October 11, 2021
Written by: Josue Rocha Maldonado

On October 11th the Braided Journey’s program here at Como celebrated Indigenous People’s Day. Showing pride in their heritage with traditional clothing including bead work, ribbon skirts and more. There was also a Land Acknowledgement over the announcements which was a statement of recognition about the lands and history behind the earth we walk on. It reads as following:

“It is important to recognize and acknowledge that the land we are on is the original homeland of the Anishinaabe and Dakota people. The colonization of the State of Minnesota is an unresolved condition of this country’s founding. We acknowledge the 11 tribes and communities of the original people that encompass the state of Minnesota, they are the original caretakers of this land and most importantly....they are still here and thriving. We ask that everyone use this statement to acknowledge and understand the history of Indigenous people and indigenous land here in Minnesota.”

Here is also a bit of what it looked like for the students showcasing the pride for their origin and bravery for believing and being confident in who they are and where they come from. We thank them.
Greetings everyone,

I am the new part time special education social worker here at Como Senior, and my other part time position is at Gordon Parks High School. I chose social work because students face an assortment of challenges including mental health, violent or stressful home environments, or physical disabilities. I like to help students identify and overcome these obstacles. Along my journey I obtained my principal's license.

Most of my career I have been in the elementary setting. I joined St. Paul Public Schools at Battle Creek Middle School as team lead of a federal 3 self-contained program in 2003. I was there for 7 years and made a change to elementary for the past 11 years. I am very excited to make this change to the senior high level to do something different and am glad I made the move. Como Senior is a fine school that offers many choices to students as they get ready to move on to Postsecondary. I am also enjoying seeing my former students from St. Anthony Park Elementary almost all grown up!

I live with my dog Huckleberry, a golden doodle, in Inver Grove Heights MN. I grew up on the shores of Lake Superior in Tofte, MN. My family are avid downhill skiers, and I enjoyed downhill racing for my high school ski team and becoming a National Ski Patrol in my teen and young adult years. My family and Huckleberry spend a lot of time at our family home in Tofte skiing at Lutsen Mountains, and hiking/biking the beautiful trails of the North Shore. I enjoy most outdoor sports, I’m an avid reader, I bake breads homemade from "scratch", I love to cook, knit fun things, and hang out with fun people.
GREAT THINGS HAPPENING AT COMO

On Friday, October 8, Como Park and Humboldt High School competed for the Mayor’s Cup at Allianz Field. Several fans including staff, students, and families supported the Como varsity boys and girls soccer teams.
UNFORGETTABLE DREAM COME TRUE

High school teams compete for first time at Allianz Field

By ERICK ERICKSON

On Friday, Oct. 8, 2021, the Minnesota United Football Club (MNUFC) hosted the first high school matches ever played at Allianz Field — the sixth annual Mayor’s Cup trophy games between the Como Park and Humboldt varsity girls and boys teams.

The experience was an unforgettable dream come true for the players, families, fans, and the St. Paul high school soccer community as a whole.

Bell Bank partnered with MNUFC to sponsor the event and provide free admission. Club officials reported just over 2,000 fans in attendance. For most, it was their first time inside the professional stadium.

And for the Como and Humboldt players who have watched their hometown team’s games on television to actually compete on the pitch and represent their schools? More than they ever could have imagined.

“It’s amazing. I never would have thought we’d be able to play here at Allianz,” said Como captain Soren Berg. “To be the first high school teams playing in this stadium is just amazing.”

MNUFC Public Relations Director Eric Durkee, a Como graduate from the class of 2004, says the club’s values are based on growing the sport and uniting the community around the game.

“From the outset of building and designing Allianz Field we wanted to create a space for soccer to succeed at all levels,” Durkee said. “We felt this was a fun way to provide a moment for high school soccer players to create memories that will hopefully last a lifetime.”

Como Park High School player Khadar Aden works to advance past a Humboldt defender during the Mayor’s Cup on Friday, Oct. 8, 2021. About 2,000 local families filled Allianz Field for the event. For most, it was their first time inside a professional stadium. The Mayor’s Cup has been held annually since 2016. The Como boys team lost in a 4-3 match, and the girls won 1-0. (Photo by Rob Spence)
Mission accomplished.

The memory making began when the gates opened. Fans filled in to the lower bowl seats behind the team benches as the girls teams warmed up, with all the music, video, and fanfare the professionals receive.

Once the girls game kicked-off, the competitive instincts of both teams kicked in. In a back and forth contest, all scoring chances were denied through the first half. Early in the second half, Como senior Liena Lopez pounced on a loose ball in the box and powered a shot into the back of the net.

The goal would hold up as the difference maker with the Como girls winning the Mayor’s Cup match by a score of 1-0.

A spontaneous celebration on the field at the final whistle was the prelude to the awards ceremony with Mayor Melvin Carter, who was on hand to watch the action and present the actual Mayor’s Cup trophies to the winning teams at the conclusion of the boys’ game that followed.

Boys match

It started with the typical speed and intensity of every Como-Humboldt boys match. The Cougars and Hawks always play with pride, but the Mayor’s Cup adds another element. And so did Allianz Field.

The pitch is wider than the school fields, the grass is beautiful and real (not turf), and the lights were shining brightly as the large crowd roared. There were several equality scoring opportunities for both teams, but even after two overtime sessions, the score remained locked at 0-0.

A penalty kick shootout isn’t used by the state high school league in the regular season. But when you’re the mayor, and two St. Paul teams are playing for the Mayor’s Cup, you ask the crowd if they want a penalty kick shootout. The answer was a resounding ‘yes’ and the mayor approved.

In dramatic fashion, Humboldt converted 4 kicks to Como’s 3. The Hawks jumped for joy while the Cougars felt momentary heartbreak.

All four teams were honored by the mayor in the post-game ceremony. They all represented their schools with outstanding effort and gave the St. Paul soccer community a night of joy.

Como boys co-coach Jonah Fields, who created the Mayor’s Cup matches back in 2016, reflected on what the night at Allianz meant.

“It was such a special privilege,” Fields said. “It’s been so much fun celebrating soccer and our communities together.”
Exceptional honors for Como students

By ERIC ERICKSON
Social studies teacher

The National Merit Scholarship Program has recognized Como senior Soren Sackreiter for his academic excellence and outstanding collegiate potential. Through his coursework and performance on the PSAT and National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, Sackreiter has been deemed a national semifinalist. That recognition is reserved for the top 1% of high school students nationwide.

Sackreiter is pursuing the distinction of becoming a National Merit Finalist through the submission and evaluation of all his most recent academic achievements (which includes advancement to National History Day).

"I took the PSAT as a sophomore to see where I was," Sackreiter said. "When I saw being within the top one percent was within reach, I decided to study more because I wanted to have the scholarship opportunities that come along with qualifying." Schools he is considering include Colorado College, University of Puget Sound, and Carleton College along with other offers that may come his way.

JROTC top honor

Como senior Aliser Paw has been a leader in her school's Marine Corps JROTC program for four years. Recently, Cadet Major Paw received the most prestigious honor a JROTC cadet can earn – the Legion of Valor Bronze Cross. Only six cadets across the world in more than 241 Marine Corps JROTC programs are selected.

Prerequisites for the Bronze Cross include consistent demonstration of military scholarship, community service, extra-curricular activities, discipline, courtesy, outstanding character, academic grades and class rank (Paw's weighted GPA is 4.3).

"This award means a lot to me as an immigrant and a person of color," Paw said. "There's no representation of my Bwe people in the news media. I have always been a shy individual not wanting attention for myself. But for this particular moment, I wanted to represent my Bwe people and finally let us be acknowledged. Winning this prestigious award is truly an honor."

Champion cross country runner

Como junior Charlie Power-Theisen didn't know what to expect when he lined up with 300 other high school runners for the Maroon Division boys race at the Roy Griak Invitational on Sept. 24.

When he finished the 5K race over the hilly terrain at the University of Minnesota Golf Course in first place, his fatigue took a back seat to satisfaction.

"I was surprised that I won," Power-Theisen said. "I was excited. It felt good. Especially after I recovered because I was super tired. Going forward, it's a big confidence booster."

Power-Theisen is the defending St. Paul City Conference Champion. But "the Griak" brings in top runners from across the state and from neighboring states. Since last year's meets were limited due to stricter COVID precautions, top runners haven't been able to see where they stand against each other.

Power-Theisen enjoyed the opportunity and obviously took full advantage. He hopes to keep building strength and endurance as he and Cougar teammates prepare for the Section 4AA Meet at the end of October – and the chance to qualify for the State Meet in November.
Semper fi. Approximately 45 of our Como park MCJROTC cadets competed at the Annual GNATS Physical Fitness Challenge at Harding High School on Saturday. More than five JROTC schools participated and the leadership of Cadet First Lieutenant Bilal "Billy" Ahmed and Cadet Sergeant Major Isaiah Cooper led their cadets to a 3rd place finish. Dominating basketball, but falling just short in the other activities, the SPIRIT AND CAMARADERIE was at the highest level at all times. GREAT job cadets.

High School Memories are forever! Capture those memories by pre-ordering a 2021-22 yearbook! Go to yearbookforever.com. Prices will increase in December, so order now! Use the coupon code "cougar" for $10.00 off. yearbookforever.com
The ACE program is taking students for their competition starting later this month. Think working in a small team on a project based in Architecture, Construction, Engineering. Here is the email to get started - TwinCitiesMN@acementor.org or email Miss Colestock - erin.colestock@stpaul.k12.mn.us
The Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA) will meet in Profe. Butler's room #1207 after school 3:10-3:45pm
All are welcome!

Future Meetings:
Thurs. Oct. 28th
Wed. Nov. 3rd
Thurs. Nov. 11th
Wed. Nov. 17th
No meeting Nov. 25th (Thanksgiving)
Wed. Dec. 1st
Thurs. Dec. 9th
Wed. Dec. 15
No meeting Dec. 23rd or 29th (Winter Break)
FIELD TRIPS ARE BACK!!

Students are enjoying being outdoors and learning about their environment

Ms. Asher’s AVID 9 class joined Wilderness Inquiry, a partner of AVID for many years, and led the students to build relationships by canoeing at Phalen Lake, playing team building games, and scientific investigation of nature.

Mr. Adair’s AP Environmental Science class went to Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary
Why: Field work including removing invasive plant species, tour of the Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary and history of how they "Daylighted" trout brook which means instead of having runoff water piped underground to the Mississippi they restored the brook so it naturally flows how it is meant to, and an earthworm inventory

We partner with local non-profit Friends of the Mississippi River...this partnership has been going on for the past 4 years.
Mr. Johnson’s class went to Belwin Conservancy where the students got to take photos of nature at its best.

Forgot your username and/or password for Campus and Schoology?

1) Go to www.spps.org/onestop
2) Select Reset/Recover Password

You will use the same username and password for both Campus and Schoology. You can reach Campus and Schoology under www.spps.org/onestop. For Campus, click on Parents/Guardians and for Schoology, click on the Schoology icon.

**Campus** is used for iUpdate, viewing your student’s schedule, looking at progress reports and report cards, and transcripts. **Schoology** is for courses and assignments for your student. Here is the Parent Guide to Schoology.
Calling all Artists!

The Como Art Department would like to introduce Como Creates.

We have missed your exceptional art in our hallways and we want to create an opportunity for ALL students to create.

Each month a new art challenge will be posted and we want YOU to accept the challenge. You can participate every month or whenever you feel inspired.

Look below for the lastest art challenge.

October Challenge “School Spirit”

Draw ANYTHING you want. Color your drawings using only Black & Gold/Yellow.

Drop off your drawing with any art teacher. All drawings will be displayed unless you prefer not to have it displayed. Drawings due: November 15th
SCHOOL PICTURE DAY UPDATE

Picture Day has been rescheduled for 11/29/2021
Retakes will be 12/16/2021

Girls Empowerment
Where: Room #1613
When: Wednesdays 3:00pm-4:00pm

Come join us and learn more about Como Park High Girls Empowerment Group

Food  Positivity  Games  Great Conversation

(Questions: See Ms. Holmes in room #1613)
COUGAR CREDIT UNION

conveniently at school for students

WHAT WE’RE ABOUT

Cougar Credit Union is one of Hiway Credit Union's in-school branches, offering traditional teller transactions and financial education for students.

We're here to give students a great and convenient opportunity to gain account experience. And when paired with financial education, it can positively impact how a young person handles their finances.

LOCATION
Room 1306

TRANSACTION HOURS
Tues - All Lunch Periods or
10:52 a.m. - 1:24 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Visit www.hiway.org
Federally insured by the NCUA
DO YOU HAVE OLD CLOTHES THAT YOU HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT HOW TO GET RID OF YET? BRING THEM TO COMO AND HELP THE GIRLS' SOCCER TEAM RAISE SOME MONEY!

The Como Girls Soccer Team has partnered with the Epilepsy Foundation for a Clothing Drive. The team will receive money for each pound of clothing they are able to collect.

Bring your donations to the weight room or to room 2713 from now to Nov. 18th, 2021. Contact Ms. Mohamed for more information.
COUNSELOR’S CORNER

Updates from the Counseling Department and the Career Pathway Center (CPC)

**Suicide Awareness for Como Students and Families** School counselors and social workers have gone in or will be going to students' advisory this month to talk about Suicide Awareness. Part of this presentation, we have talked about the in-house mental health trained support staff that students have access to at Como Park. We also talked about resources they have after school hours: going to a trusted adult, calling 9-1-1 and/or contacting the National Suicide Hotline. [Click here](#) for some resources that families can also reach out to for additional support. Do not hesitate to reach out to your child's school counselor for additional resources or support.

**College Admission Rep Visits** The Career Pathway Center (CPC) is hosting dozens of college admissions reps this fall. This is an opportunity for juniors and seniors to hear about various colleges and get their questions answered. Check out the [CPC Event Calendar](#) to see the full list of upcoming college rep visits.

**Mark Your Calendars: Como Fall Financial Aid Night** Como’s Fall Financial Aid Night will take place on Tuesday, November 9 from 4-7pm in the Como cafeteria. Como students and their families will learn about financial aid and seniors will have an opportunity to complete the FAFSA and the MN Dream Act. Check out this resource [MN Goes to College FAFSA Event page](#) with information on what you’ll need to complete the FAFSA and MN Dream Act. Also, check out the [Paying for College page](#) on the CPC website to learn more about financial aid and review FAFSA and MN Dream Act walkthrough videos. Contact Ms. Bridgette at [bkelly.cap@spps.org](mailto:bkelly.cap@spps.org) for more information. A pizza dinner will be provided.

**Seniors! Wallin Scholarship Opens Nov 1** The Wallin Scholarship program offers $4,000/year ($16,000 over four years!), targeted advising, and paid internship opportunities. [CLICK HERE](#) to check out a 1-min video, review eligibility requirements, and to APPLY starting November 1! Contact Ms. Bridgette at [bkelly.cap@spps.org](mailto:bkelly.cap@spps.org) with any questions.

[Click HERE](#) for more information on College Resources + Events, Student Career Resources, Family Resources, and Paying for College

**CONTACT US**

[Counseling Department Website](#)

[Como Park Career Pathway Center Website](#)
OCTOBER IS BULLY PREVENTION MONTH

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021

WEAR AND SHARE ORANGE

to show unity for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion and to send a visible message that no child should ever experience bullying.

#UnityDay2021